

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 6, 7, 10, 17, 18 and 19 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter, and amend the claims as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of managing a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts, said hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said communication nodes comprising data and control interfaces for exchanging data and operating commands with hosts to which said communication nodes are connected, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a ~~search~~ first seek signal from a ~~first~~ local communication node to a ~~second~~ distant communication node of the sub-network, said ~~search~~ first seek signal containing information representing first technical ~~features~~ characteristics of a host to be actuated ~~from said first communication node~~, the transmission of the first seek signal being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control; and

identifying a candidate host, that is connected to said ~~second~~ distant communication node and that has technical ~~features~~ characteristics compatible with the technical ~~features~~ characteristics contained in the ~~search~~ first seek signal;

wherein, if said candidate host ~~proves not to be~~ is not the host to be actuated, a ~~search~~ a second seek signal is transmitted ~~once again in order to continue the~~ search from the local communication node, said second seek signal containing second

technical characteristics, the transmission of the second seek signal being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control,

whereas, if said host ~~does prove to be~~ is the host to be actuated, operating commands are sent to said candidate host by means of the control interface of the ~~second distant~~ communication node, ~~and the search is interrupted.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein if the data interface of the candidate host is adapted to exchange analogue data signals, then during the step of identifying the candidate host, the compatibility of the technical ~~features~~ characteristics contained in the ~~search~~ first seek signal is determined with regard to the technical ~~features~~ characteristics of the data interface of the candidate host.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the steps of transmitting and identifying are repeated until the identification of two hosts ~~that do prove to be~~ being the hosts to be actuated, in order to put said two hosts into communication.

4. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 3, wherein the two hosts put into communication are connected to the same communication node.

5. to 10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable storage medium on which is stored a computer executable program, wherein the program implements a method of managing a communication network comprising a sub-network having communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts, said hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said communication nodes comprising data and control interfaces for exchanging data and operating commands with hosts to which said communication nodes are connected, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting a ~~search~~ first seek signal from a ~~first~~ local communication node to a ~~second~~ distant communication node of the sub-network, said ~~search~~ first seek signal containing information representing first technical ~~features~~ characteristics of a host to be actuated ~~from said first communication node~~, the transmission of the first seek signal being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control; and

identifying a candidate host[[,]] that is connected to said ~~second~~ distant communication node and that has technical ~~features~~ characteristics compatible with the technical ~~features~~ characteristics contained in the ~~search~~ first seek signal;

wherein, if said candidate host ~~proves not to be~~ is not the host to be actuated, a ~~search~~ second seek signal is transmitted ~~once again in order to continue the search~~ from the local communication node, said second seek signal containing second technical characteristics, the transmission of the second seek signal being performed in accordance with instructions from a remote control,

whereas, if said host ~~does prove to be~~ is the host to be actuated, operating commands are sent to said candidate host by means of the control interface of the ~~second distant~~ distant communication node, ~~and the search is interrupted.~~

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying signals, and a plurality of hosts being able to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

comparing means for comparing technical ~~features~~ characteristics indicated in a received ~~search~~ seek signal with technical ~~features~~ characteristics of a host to which said node is connected; and

a control interface that starts up and operates said host based on a comparison result by the comparing means, and that transmits the ~~search~~ received seek signal once again on the sub-network when the comparing means determines that the technical ~~features~~ characteristics indicated in the received ~~search~~ seek signal are different from the technical ~~features~~ characteristics of the host.

14. (Previously Presented) The communication node according to Claim 13, further comprising:

at least one data interface for connecting a host to exchange analog signals and to receive operation commands from said control interface; and

a unit for supplying said control interface with received signals which represent these operating commands.

15. (Currently Amended) A communication node that forms part of a communication network comprising a sub-network consisting of communication nodes interconnected by links conveying digital signals, and a plurality of hosts to exchange data via the sub-network, said node comprising:

transmitting means for transmitting₂ to all nodes in the network₂ a ~~search~~ seek signal containing information representing technical ~~features~~ characteristics of a host to be actuated;

determining means for determining when the ~~search~~ seek signal is transmitted again on the sub-network; and

sending means for sending operating commands to said host to be actuated when the ~~search~~ seek signal is no longer transmitted again on the sub-network.

16. (Previously Presented) The communication node according to Claim 15, further comprising:

at least one receiver to receive operating commands intended for said host to be actuated; and

a unit to produce signals representing the operating commands.

17. to 19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~searching for~~ seeking an apparatus possessing [[a]] predetermined technical ~~feature~~ characteristics by a communication apparatus, comprising:

a wireless receiving step of wirelessly receiving an instruction signal for instructing to ~~search for~~ seek an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical ~~feature~~ characteristics; and

a ~~searching~~ seeking step of ~~searching for~~ seeking an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical ~~feature~~ characteristics based on the received instruction signal, wherein said ~~searching~~ seeking step comprises:

a requesting step of wirelessly sending a request to a distant apparatus to obtain information on a connected apparatus connected to said distant apparatus; and

a step of continuing ~~searching~~ seeking for an apparatus possessing the predetermined technical ~~feature~~ characteristics, based on a response to the request received from the distant apparatus.